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COLOUR TERMS AS COMPONENTS OF UKRAINIAN AND ENGLISH IDIOMS: AN ATTEMPT AT A CONTRASTIVE LINGUOCULTURAL ANALYSIS

Roksolana Zorivchak

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, 1, Universytetska St., Lviv, Ukraine, 79000 rvzori@ukr.net

The article offers a contrastive analysis of colour terms (CTs) as components of the phraseological units in English and Ukrainian. Among the perceptive variables considered that of colour is one in which we are physically capable of making a considerable numbers of distinctions, so the question how these are grouped into classes in any given language is of great importance. The notion of colour has many aspects, it also contains a fair amount of relevant information accumulated by the language bearer and rooted in the structure of colour concepts by which the language community operates (e.g., the symbolic meaning of colour, evaluative components, colour preferences, etc.). The lexical meaning of a CT – the unit of the language which names a certain domain of the colour spectrum – is the lingual interpretation of man's knowledge and notions about a natural colour signal. In the contrastive aspect the denotative component of CTs is mainly, convergent, designating the shade, brightness and saturation of colour, however, their connotative components are frequently divergent and often dependent on the specific communicative load of a given CT as a constituent of the utterance. In Ukrainian CTs are adjectives, adverbs (not infrequently used with diminutive suffixes or with prefixes, sometimes in the prolonged forms) and verbs, while in English they are limited only to adjectives.

CTs can be given a specific meaning in certain contexts. Whereas the primary coding of CTs must be understood as an act of naming (primary coding is a set of morphemes), a secondary coding is either a wilful act carried out by a person or it is suggested by the conventions of a society or culture. The connotative component includes different associative symbolic shades of meaning and contains some implicit information yielded by the imagined connections of phenomena of various nature on the basis of associations. The background knowledge of the phenomenon of colour is a rich source of occasional sense components of CTs.

Keywords: colour terms, phraseological unit, Ukrainian, English, contrastive analysis, denotative meaning, connotative meaning, linguocultural studies.

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The subject matter of the research. One of the most important recent developments in linguistics is the revival of interest in language universals. Universals of language are terms in linguistics for presumed universal properties of human languages which could be absolute and partial. This leads to an upsurge of interest in linguistic typology that focuses on properties common to a group of languages [16; 20].

The number of languages estimated to exist in Europe, according to the first continental linguistic Atlas *Linguarum Europae*, published in 1970, varies from 143 to 200. The figure depends on where a line is drawn between a language and a dialect.

The recent efforts have had the benefit of a rather large storehouse of information about the world's languages. Now linguists are better prepared theoretically to postulate language universals. The assumption that there are universal constraints in language is basic to the implementation of Contrastive Analysis. Even in a rudimentary form, viewing languages from the standpoint of universals readily allows for discovering the similarities and diversities among them. If all languages share universals then any differences are to be found in the ways these universals are realized in particular languages.

Among the perceptive variables that of colour is one in which we are physically capable of making a very large number of distinctions (there are estimated to be thousands discriminable, and in part, although not that small, discernible by the human eye and perception, shades of colour), so the question how these are grouped into classes in any given language is very far from trivial. In 1969 two anthropologists Bren Berlin and Paul Kay caused a considerable stir by publishing a book titled 'Basic Colour Terms' [14] where they made an attempt to prove that the colour differences between languages are relatively superficial matters which mask certain deep underlying principles common to the colour terminologies of all languages.

The notion **of colour** is connected with that of the **concept** as a language cognitive construct. The world of colour as perceived by the speakers of a given language is based on **colour concepts** forged by culture and traditions in a given language, which reflect both the objective, inherent colour characteristics and relationships, and the knowledge of colour which is subjective and interpretative. The notion of colour has many aspects and contains a set of substantial information, accumulated by the language bearers. This information is rooted in the structure of colour concepts, by which the language community operates (e.g., the symbolic meaning of colour, evaluative components, colour preferences, etc.). It is very likely that social factors such as trade and conquest drive the evolution of colour vocabularies. It seems clear that culture plays a significant role in both the origins and the boundaries of colour categories. It appears that a proper understanding of even the denotations of each colour is very important.

Contrastive Analysis is a relatively modern discipline. It emerged as a major linguistic tool during and after World War II, particularly in the United States in the context of second and foreign language teaching [15, p. 46]. In Ukraine, contrastive studies were initiated by Professor Yuriy Zhluktenko in the 1970s [3; 4]. His contribution to the Ukrainian English studies is very special, if not unique. He introduced contrastive linguistics (the way it was developed in Ukraine) to a wide global setting. Zhluktenko's scholarly insight and vision contributed to the development of Ukrainian lexicography, inter- and sociolinguistics, but also, even more significantly for its novelty in this country at that time, contrastive linguistics.

The historical overview of the colour term research. Due to 'A Concordance to the Poetic Works of Taras Shevchenko' published in 2001 (in 4 volumes, edited and compiled by O. Ilnytskyi

and Yu. Havrysh) the reader may collect the information how many times the colour verbs have been used in Shevchenko's poetry: the verb *червоніти* was used 18 times [12, vol. 2, p. 1991]: the lexeme *синіти* was used 4 times [12, vol. 2, 1617]: the verb *біліти* 8 times [12, vol. 1, p. 87] while the lexeme *чорніти* was used 19 times [volume 3, p. 2013]. The verb lexeme *жовтіти* is used only once [12, vol. 1, p. 520]. This is the most complete and detailed index (concordance) of the text of any Ukrainian writer and an unprecedented such corpus for Ukrainian at large. It presents a full account of the location and textual setting of every occurrence of every word in Shevchenko's oeuvre. 18,401 word forms are attested, sorted, pinpointed and contextualized in each of their 83,731 appearances over a span of 22,241 lines.

The lexicography of colour is considerably burdened by a lack of consensus of the meaning of many colour names. Even the core hues and shades in the 'colours world' have divergent definitions in the standard dictionaries, sometimes even in two editions of the same dictionary. Furthermore, American and British usage is not uniformed. A similar absence of uniformity in the description of colours is also evident in the Ukrainian sources. In recent years the American dictionary makers have improved the situation by using in their colour descriptions a special system known as Universal Colour Language (UCL). This system developed by the National Bureau of Standards represents a simple and practical way of describing 267 main colours.

In 1986, the Shevchenko Scholarly Society in the USA published 'English-Ukrainian Dictionary of Color Names and Color Science' [2]. It was compiled by Anatole Vovk, a Ukrainian researcher in America. The compiler of this dictionary made a rather successful attempt at adapting the Ukrainian colour terms to this system. In addition to the names of colours, the Vovk's dictionary includes names used for descriptions of multi-coloured and part-coloured objects such as colorations of animal coats. Basically the colour science and its practical applications in dictionaries were much more developed in the Anglophone world than in Ukraine. Vovk is also the author of 'English-Ukrainian Dictionary of Selected Terms' [13]. The dictionary contains approximately 10,000 words and word-combinations in American English language and their Ukrainian correspondences. The compiler meant this dictionary as an extension and modernization of the English-Ukrainian dictionary by M. Podvezko and M. Balla. The dictionary is a solid contribution to the study of colour terms in the English/Ukrainian intercultural communication. Also, the CTs problem was treated here in Lviv in 2001 by Iryna Kovalska [5].

The essence of the research. The lexical meaning of a colour term – the unit of the language which names a certain domain of the colour space – is the lingual interpretation of man's knowledge and notions about a natural colour signal. In the contrastive aspect the denotative component of a CT is mainly convergent, designating the shade, brightness and saturation of colour, however, their connotative components are frequently divergent and often dependant on their specific communicative load in the text. The connotative component is not necessarily fixed, it is always open to the influence of new subjective information, it has a certain pragmatic potential. The basis for the appearance of connotative components in the structure of the meaning of a CT is shaped both by colour concepts and any spontaneous associative links appearing in the speaker's psyche as a result of complex relations between colour images and certain parts of reality.

A basic colour term (BCT) is a colour word that is applicable to a wide class of objects. In English it is typically monolexemic. It is also reliably used by most native speakers. The languages of modern industrial societies have thousands of colour words, but only a very slender stock of basic colour terms. English has eleven of them: *black*, *white*, *red*, *yellow*, *green*, *blue*, *gray*, *orange*, *brown*, *pink* and *purple*. Ukrainian has 12 with a separate basic term for *light*

blue – голубий.

In unwritten and tribal languages the number of BCTs is smaller, perhaps as few as two or three, with denotations that span much larger regions of colour space than the BCT denotations of major modern languages. In English the terms: *black, white, red, yellow, green, blue, gray, orange, brown* have roots that go back to Old English and before. *Purple* and *orange* were borrowed from Latin and Arabic, and *pink* emerged sometime in the sixteenth century.

Owing to Slavonic researchers, in particular Kunin, Vinogradov, Barantsev, Skrypnyk, with us the system of terms in phraseology is clear-cut and well-elaborated. In the Anglophone world, strange as it might seem, the distinction between terms is rather vague. Thus, in the dictionaries complied by Frederick Wood, an outstanding researcher, whose books on the English language are now regarded as standard authorities, particularly in the two-part edition 'English Prepositional Idioms', a construction of a noun and a preposition, e.g. within an hour, to the limit, is considered to be an idiomatic construction [20, p. 90, 342].

In Ukrainian, CTs include adjectives, adverbs (sometimes used with diminutive suffixes, with prefixes or in prolonged forms) and verbs, while in English they are limited only to adjectives. See e.g. in the poem by A. Sodomora:

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I скільки б часу не перетекло, Не відбіліло, не відзеленіло, — В мені — твого середньовіччя тло, На маргінесах — зелено і біло... [7, р. 75].
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There is a passage from the poem 'The Dream' by T. Shevchenko with a verbal CT:

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I знов лечу. Земля чорніє,
Дрімає мозок, серце мліє.... [10, vol. 1, p. 185].
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In the Anglophone translation by C. H. Andrusyshen and W. Kirkconnell the colour term is an adjective:

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Again I fly. The earth is dark, My mind's a-drowse, my heart grows faint... [19, p.169].
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In a very interesting translation by Vera Rich the colour image has been completely changed:

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I fly once more. Darkness comes stealing, Brain drowses, and the heart is reeling.... [9, p. 187].
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Here is another sample from Shevchenko's poetry. In the verse 'У Бога за дверми лежала сокира...' it is said:

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Неначе ляля в льолі білій, Святеє сонечко зійшло. Пустиня циганом чорніла.... [10, vol. 2, p. 74].
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In the translation by C. H. Andrusyshen and W. Kirkconnell it is rendered as:

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Like a child's doll in a white tunic dressed,
The blessed sun arose. The wilderness
Still looked as black and ugly as a gypsy... [19, p. 352].
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A colour term can be ascribed a specific meaning in certain contexts. Whereas the primary coding of a CT must be understood as an act of naming (primary coding in a set of morphemes),

and a secondary coding is either a wilful act and carried out by a person or is suggested by the conventions of a society or culture. The best known example of the latter type are traffic lights: *red* is not only just a warning 'danger ahead' but a clear order 'stop', *green* informs the road user of the absence of danger and can be understood as an order 'go'. The usage of a third colour in traffic lights named *жовтий* in Ukrainian – a basic CT, but 'amber' (although sometimes exchangeable in reference with *orange* and even *yellow*) in English – a motivated one.

In the English language there is a Biblical phrase *Cain-coloured*. In Shakespeare's comedy 'The Merry Wives of Windsor' there is a slanderer that is characterized in such a way: 'he hath but a little wee face, with a little yellow beard, Cain-coloured beard' [18]. In the Ukrainian language the colour рудий provokes pejorative connotations. As for example, in the folk song 'Любив козак три дівчиноньки: чорнявую та білявую, третю – руду, препоганую'. While translating the Shakespearian text, Olha Seniuk made a very apt transformation of the complicated colour term: "у нього дрібненьке бліде лице і ріденька русява борідка. Таки руда, мов у Каїна" [11].

In primitive cultures painted complexions signalled the dominating traits of their bearers: falsehood, honesty, etc. Yet all of these signs or signal functions and uses of colours are linguistically irrelevant. They reveal the possibility of colours and consequently of a corresponding CT assuming meanings other than those of colour designation. But apart from that they are phenomena of semiotics and above all of colour psychology. They are of a certain linguistic significance as some of these codings that actually refer to signals have become lexicalized and are now idiomatic expressions. This is the case with the expression (show) the white flag which originally was the physical display of a flag or a cloth that was white with the signal function of announcing truce and/or general non-belligerence to an the opponent in battle. Similarly the blackjack signalled 'piratry' or non-adherence to the law of the sea. In a bullfight the red cloth signalled 'attack and aggression'.

Thus phrases to show the white flag, it is a red cloth to someone, or, in reference to traffic lights, to have a green light are **encodings of colours** which have resulted in expressions which can also be classified as fixed figurative usages of CTs. This may also be said of the signal function of the conventional dress of workers and office clerks which produced the phrases blue collar workers and white collar workers.

The connotative component includes different associative symbolic shades of meaning. It contains some implicit information yielded by the imagined connections of phenomena of various nature on the basis of associations. The background human knowledge of the phenomenon of colour is a rich source of the occasional sense components of a CT. The ethnic and cultural components can be traced both on the denotative and connotative levels: Quaker grey; Cairngorm eyes; чорний, мов земля; red and green; калиновий, вороний. The extralinguistic factors can involve some common components coincident in both languages, cf. purple::nypnypoвий. As it was a distinguished colour of the dresses of kings and emperors, purple can stand for the sense 'royal', 'imperial', 'of noble blood' as in to be born to the purple, i.e. 'of royal or high birth'; or in purple and linen, i.e. 'in magnificence and splendour'. In Late Mediaeval usage in English, however, it could also imply 'mourning' in reference to high ranking clergy and nobles. Also within the ecclesiastical sphere there is the phrase purple sin, a figurative usage which implies 'blood', i.e. 'a sin of blood'. Also involving a degree of meaningfulness of the colour component in the idiom Born with a silver spoon in one's mouth - 'to have rich parents, a privileged, comfortable and sheltered upbringing' – народитися в колисці з яворового дерева. Quite an interesting 'solution' of equivalence in Ukrainian.

Let us compare the figurative usage of the lexemes grey and cipuŭ: One can speak of grey

prospects or possibly say that it was a grey day in his life. 'Grey theory' may go back to Goethe's famous line in Faust: 'Grau ist alle Theorie, und grün nur ist des Lebens goldner Baum'. In the English phrase Grey Eminence, the reference is to the vestments of Cardinal Richelieu and consequently to the Cardinal himself who happened to have utmost powers in the French court. Thus the English collocation is most likely a translation of the French eminence grise. Cf. a metaphorical use in Ukrainian: "З неба сірої безодні міріадами летять ці метелики холодні" (І. Franko).

The symbolic components of meaning of CTs are very mobile and versatile. For the most part they depend on the intended coding. The sources of symbolism of colour are numerous: direct colour associations, e.g. green (the colour of living nature – the colour of life – the symbol of youth and love in the English literary tradition). The Ukrainian people call Trinity Зелені свята от зелена неділя – 'Хоч Петра діждати, / Хоч зеленої неділі' (Т. Shevchenko). In colouration vocabulary there could also figure sacred sources, e.g. English: scarlet – the colour of sin, white – the colour of innocence; Ukrainian: білий – the symbol of chastity and holiness: біле личко, where the connotative meaning prevails, білим світом нудить, where colour attribution is not in the literal sense. In Shevchenko's poem 'У бога за дверми лежала сокира…' we read: 'Неначе ляля в льолі білій, / Святеє сонечко зійшло'); чорний – that of death and hell, синій – that of heavenly wisdom.

Colours are inseparable from the traditions of everyday life and fashion; cf. the symbolism of colours in the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. Colour symbols can be connected with political realia (English: green – the colour of Ireland, red –associated with England through the red colour of the uniform of English soldiers; Ukrainian – uepвоні, білі, зелені). The English term white government may contextually possess two different meanings, cf.: 'African nationalists opposed the federation, but their movements were banned by the white government '(уряд білих); the white government in Russia in 1918 (уряд білогвардійців).

A vivid stylistic potential is latent in the CT black in both languages. There are two characteristics where black occurs in figurative use: (a) black is often understood in antithetical opposition to white or light; (b) black generally occurs with pejorative associations. These two features are characteristic of both Ukrainian and English. This is especially true of black used as a symbol where intuitive coding is quite strong. Conscious or unconscious reference is established with the domains of religion, mythology and old customs. In Genesis 1.4 God divides the universe into light and darkness, the third apocalyptic rider rides a black horse (Rev. 6. 5-6), people in the Middle Ages believed in black witches and black art or black magic. The following list shows possible associations with black and their linguistic expression in collocations with black: dark, unknown, uncanny (black magic – чорна магія); hopeless, devoid of luck (black despair – чорний είθναŭ); troublesome, dangerous (to get on black ice); soiled, laden with guilt (your hands are black); exhausted, thin (худий, аж чорний); dishonest (black money – чорний ринок); coercion (blackmail – шантаж); crime (blacklist –чорний злочин); disgrace (blackmarks – nompanumu на чорну дошку); evil (black deeds – чорні діла); чорні хмари – black clouds; evil forces (black power – темні сили); angry (a black look); macabre (black humour – чорний гумор), Among the common similes used to denote blackness there are: black as a crow, a raven (a bird of ill omen, fabled to forebode death and to bring infection and bad luck. This association was prompted by the fact that in Medieval times the ravens were following an army in the expectation of corpses to raven on. Cicero was forewarned of his death by the fluttering of ravens. According to Roman legend, ravens were once as white as swans and not inferior in size; but one day a raven told Apollo that Coronis, a nymph whom he passionately loved, was faithless. The god shot the nymph with

his dart; but hating the tell-tale bird he blackened the raven over.

The colour *black* is used with a wide range of references and empowered (actualized) sense transitions, e.g. a raven's wing, ink, hell (the abode of the dead, then traditionally the place of torment or punishment after death), Hades (in Homer Hades is the name of the god Pluto who reigns over the dead; but in later classical mythology the abode of the departed spirits, a place of gloom but not necessarily a place of punishment and torture), death, the grave, your hat, thunder or thundercloud, Egypt's night, ebony, coal, pitch, soot, tar, etc.; Black Maria – чорний ворон; black mass – чорна відправа (реквієм); black-out: from the outbreak of war against Germany (3 Sept. 1939) until 23 April, 1945 (coastal areas, 11 May) it was obligatory throughout Great Britain to cover all windows, skylights, etc., before dark so that no gleam of light could be seen from the outside. Moving vehicles were only allowed the dimmest of lights. The essential air raid precaution was called the Black-out.

Drawing consistent contextual evidence from both languages is deemed conducive lesser known dimensions of contrastive lexicology and stylistics [cf. 1; 8; 17; 21]:

BLUE :: СИНІЙ

The colour of *blue* is associated with clear sky and water both in Ukrainian and English. *Cuhe mope* is a very widely used phrase in Ukrainian. One cannot consider it to be an epithet construction. It is rather a cliche. *Between the devil and the deep blue sea* implies 'having two possible courses of action open to one both being unpleasant'. *Black and blue* stands for 'bruised'. And the idiom *Out of the blue (a bolt from the blue)* bears the undertone 'unexpectedly, as if from nowhere' ('He was set upon by a couple of ruffians, who appeared out of the blue'); cf. Ukr. Γρίμα 3 πειοгο μεδα. And a blue-eyed boy is 'a pupil who is favoured, by an employer'.

The historical-cultural implications of an English colour idiom may go beyond the immediate context of English. Hence *blue blood* is 'the blood of a noble or royal family (blue blood in one's veins)'. A translation of the Spanish *sangre azul* used by some families to mean that they have no Moorish (referring to a Muslim people inhabiting in NorthWest Africa) blood. The idiom is applicable to social ranking hierarchies as in the verse of Lessia Ukrainka from her poem "Давня казка".

У мужички руки чорні,

В пані рученька тендітна; Що ж, недарма люди кажуть, Що в панів і *кров блакитна*! Мужики цікаві стали, Чи ті кості білі всюди,

Чи блакитна кров поллється,

Як пробити пану груди? [6, р. 72].

In English the idiom *blue-stocking* is attributed to 'a learned, bookish or pedantic woman'. It originated from the unconventional blue (instead the usual black) stockings worn by Benjamin Stillingfleet at literary meetings in the home of E. R. Montagu in London in the 1750's [21, p. 153]. The phrase is current in the Ukrainian language too with more pejorative connotations: *синя панчоха* (зневажл.) – 'суха, черства жінка, яка позбавлена жіночості, чарівності і цілком віддана науковим інтересам, книгам' [8, vol. 2, p. 607].

RED :: ЧЕРВОНИЙ

The juxtaposition of the same CT lexemes from the two contrasted languages leads to both equivalent and non-equivalent instances of their contextual usage with a amount of etymological

and cultural-historical substantiation:

Red tape – 'the heavy use of and emphasis on official papers in the work of some public groups or the government'.

See red – 'to become violently angry'; catch red-handed – 'to discover or seize someone as he is doing something forbidden' – Ukr. зловити на гарячому.

The/a thin red line – 'a small group of brave people that defend an area or principle and refuse to yield to any attack'. First used in 1877 by W. H. Russell to refer to the British troops (who wore red uniforms) in the Crimean war.

A red-letter day (from the fact that important days are often shown in red on a calendar).

In the red – 'owing more than one can pay' (between colloquialism and slang). In banking and accountancy an adverse balance is entered in red ink, e.g. If I don't get some money from somewhere very soon, I shall be in the red.

Conclusions. The conceptualization of the world proves to influence the usage of colour lexemes in different languages. Incomplete isomorphism between the semantic structures of the corresponding Ukrainian and English CTs is rooted in a number of factors mentioned above as well as in the complexity of CTs meaning and sense-stylistic overtones. In the sememes with the prevailing colour component, the scope of denotative meaning is justified by the closeness to a particular colour visual focus. However, depending on the context, 'parallel' archsemes to those denoting colour are actualized (*she had red eyes, старовинні пожовклі книги*). In certain cases there appears a semic specifier of colour changes, cf.: *white snow, white man, white wine, white coffee, зелені яблука, зелене обличчя*).

According to the nature of the links between the symbol and the notion the following groups of symbols can be singled out: (1) imitating symbols (yellow, xcosmuŭ - the colour sign of the sun, of <math>gold), which make up the largest group; (2) so-called indices that allow to establish an associative link between the colour and the notion (blue, cuniŭ – the colour of depth, of cold); (3) coded colour symbols, revealing solely conventional links, characterizing the phenomena of a certain culture on a certain level of development (yellow – the colour of jealousy in the English cultural tradition starting with Renaissance). Colour symbolism may originate from the metaphorical meaning of a word, where there are connotations that occupy the nucleus of the semantic structure.

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КОЛЬОРЕМИ ЯК КОМПОНЕНТИ ФРАЗЕОЛОГІЧНИХ ОДИНИЦЬ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ТА АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВ: СПРОБА КОНТРАСТИВНОГО ЛІНГВОКУЛЬТУРОЛОГІЧНОГО АНАЛІЗУ

Роксолана Зорівчак

Львівський національний університет імені Івана Франка вул. Університетська, 1, Львів, Україна, 79000 rvzori@ukr.net

Досліджено кольореми як компоненти фразеологізмів в англійській та українській мовах. З'ясовано, що лексичне значення кольореми, що називає певну ділянку колірного простору, є мовною інтерпретацією знань людини про природний колірний сигнал, а кольори та їхні відтінки — дуже різноманітні, тому їх по-різному групують у мовах. Щодо денотативного значення кольорем, досліджено, що англійська та українська мови мають головно конвергентні характеристики: одинадцять основних кольорів в англійській мові та дванадцять в українській. Що ж до конотативного значення кольорем, зумовленого лінгвокультурними своєрідностями націй, їхньою ментальністю, то часто риси дивергентності властиві англійській та українській мовам. Щодо граматичного статусу, то кольореми англійської мови обмежуються прикметниками, тоді як в українській мові є також дієслівні кольореми, є видовжені форми прикметників. Найбільше фразеологічних одиниць налічується з кольоремою black — чорний. Дивергентні риси кольорем легше виявляти на основі контрастивного аналізу, а пояснювати глибинну суть цих дивергенцій доречно за допомогою лінгвокультурологічних досліджень.

Ключові слова: кольорема; фразеологічна одиниця; українська мова; англійська мова; контрастивний аналіз; денотативне значення; конотативне значення; лінгвокультурологія.